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LETTER DATED 4 APRIL 1999 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to forward herewith copies of the letters from Zivadin Jovanovic, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, addressed to Mr. Federico Mayor, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, on 2 and 3 April 1999 (see annexes I and II) concerning the destruction of the national heritage of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia caused by the aggression of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annexes circulated as documents of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex I

Letter dated 2 April 1999 from the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia addressed to the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Since 24 March, a brutal aggression by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, spearheaded by the United States of America against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a sovereign country, a founding member of the United Nations and a member State of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has been going on. This has grossly violated the fundamental principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and dealt the most dangerous blow so far to the entire system of international relations. For the first time after the Second World War, a sovereign European country has been exposed to aggression and, for the first time, the mightiest military alliance is cooperating directly with a separatist/terrorist organization in attacking the sovereignty and integrity of a member of the international community.

The aggressor is massively bombing civilian targets, towns and villages, many infrastructure facilities and cultural monuments across the Yugoslav territory. The countries, particularly those from Europe, taking part in the destruction of the cultural monuments in the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, know full well their civilizational value. They represent not only Serbian and Yugoslav cultural heritage but yours as well, since many of them have been proclaimed to be under UNESCO protection.

Not only are the cultural and architectural monuments destroyed or damaged but many scientific and other institutions are as well. More than 100 schools in the entire Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have been damaged to such an extent that classes had to be suspended in schools and universities, which will have unforeseeable consequences. We expect to hear the voice of your conscience in protecting 2,787 registered cultural monuments, out of which 1,300 are located in Serbian and European territory, Kosovo and Metohija.

Most directly affected are four sites included in the UNESCO World Heritage List: Durmitor National Park, Kotor (which has been endangered on a daily basis by NATO missiles), Stari Ras - Sopocani and Studenica. These monuments have to be immediately placed on the List of Endangered Sites, as do the Decane monastery (from the fourteenth century) and Biogradska Gora National Park, which have been nominated for the World Heritage List, and several dozen cultural monuments in Kosovo and Metohija whose names have already been transmitted to UNESCO. I shall mention some of them: Patriarchate of Pec (thirteenth century) and Bajrakli Mosque in Pec (fifteenth century), the Church of the Virgin Ljeviska (fourteenth century), St. Archangel monastery in Prizren (fourteenth century), Sinan Pasha's mosque in Prizren (seventeenth century), ancient Ulpiana (fourteenth century) and Gazimestan (fourteenth century). Gracanica, a monastery from the fourteenth century, famous for its frescos, has been repeatedly shelled and damaged. Seriously endangered are monasteries Ostrog (sixteenth century) and Moraca (thirteenth century) as well as the old town of

Cetinje in Montenegro. Daily air strikes against Fruska Gora most directly endanger the biggest monastery complex in Europe (35 in all, dating back to the sixteenth century).

Also endangered are some 1,700 natural beauty sites in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Under the pretext of preventing a "humanitarian catastrophe" in Kosovo and Metohija and allegedly protecting "human rights", bombs and cruise missiles, which do not make a national or ethnic distinction, create a genuine humanitarian catastrophe, unseen in Europe since the Second World War. Such a blatant act of aggression, raining death on hundreds of civilians has to be stopped immediately. The States committing such acts bear political, material and any other responsibility and shall be judged by history.

I therefore call upon you to raise your voice of reason and immediately act within your powers in order to stop the aggression, and particularly the barbaric destruction of the cultural heritage of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Europe and the world. It is of utmost importance that you personally engage in preventing these anti-civilizational acts against humanity and the basic principles of UNESCO.

(Signed) Zivadin JOVANOVIC

Annex II

Letter dated 3 April 1999 from the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia addressed to the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

With reference to your letter of 2 April 1999, I should like to inform you of further escalation in bombing the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by aggressors from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The aggressor air forces increasingly and more extensively bomb civilian targets, cities, villages and infrastructure. As I have already informed you, particularly endangered are cultural monuments across the Yugoslav territory.

The latest example of this barbaric act is the destruction of a bridge on the Danube, which connected Novi Sad with Petrovaradin. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that this bridge has a particular place in cultural-historical heritage of Yugoslavia and Europe and is under State protection. In April 1942, Nazis shot and threw in the river thousands of arrested civilians, primarily Jews and Serbs, from that bridge.

In the immediate vicinity of the Bridge of Sorrow, there is the Square of the Victims of Fascism, with a monument containing the names of killed Serbs and Jews, symbolizing the unity of multi-ethnic Vojvodina in the fight against the Fascist occupier.

Unfortunately, today these sacrosanct symbols of history and culture, not only of Yugoslavia but of all of Europe as well, have been lastingly scarred by the barbaric aggression of the United States of America and NATO, contrary to all civilizational norms. The destruction of the bridge has left 600,000 residents without water, and navigation along this international waterway has been discontinued.

I again call upon you to raise your voice so that UNESCO may intervene to stop this senseless aggression by NATO, threatening with its barbaric nature the holiest values of European culture and historical heritage.

(Signed) Živadin JOVANOVIĆ